

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 17 as follows:

In the example shown in Figure 3, the leftmost seven bytes, labeled 2004, of the 144-bit ~~rule~~ 2000 match key 2002 are defined as a masked compare (M control setting), in which the leftmost byte ~~corresponding~~ corresponds to byte 2006 of the match key 2002. This is followed by an 8-bit range field, 2008, defined by the R control setting, which is then followed by two 16-bit range fields, 2010a and 2012a, each defined by the pairing of the R and L control setting, 2010b and 2012b. These ranges are then followed by an 8-bit mask field 2014 and then a 40-bit range 2016 which is indicated by the R followed by four Ls in the control vector 2000. This last range is then followed by Xs to fill out the rest of the 192-bit control vector which indicates the end of this rule, in which the left most byte corresponds to byte 2018 of the match key 2002.